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their land, and thus obtain only half the crop from that portion, their surplus for sale or exchange would only be worth £5 os. od. There are many families, about one third of the farming population, in this situation. Perhaps another third have just enough land to live on without renting, and one third, rich peasants rather than landlords, possess a surplus of land which they lease to others.

With these small margins it is obvious that very little trade can be done with the outside world, or even with other parts of the province. Very different was the situation when opium was grown as the winter crop. Opium yielded sixty catties to the *mu* and sold for 6 $ Nickel the catty. In terms of sterling this is 1s. 6d. for one and a quarter pounds. Consequently the farmer realised £4 10s. od. per *mu* for his opium crop, or £27 on the acre. When it is realised that three acres of rice and wheat only yield crops to the value of £20, the consequences of the suppression of opium become plain. The family with three acres, eighteen *mu*, used to raise opium crops to the value of £87 os. od. in addition to their rice crop worth about £18 os. od. To-day all this has disappeared and they are left with the £20 os. od. return on their wheat and rice, of which half is consumed as food.

It is remarkable in these circumstances that the value of land has only fallen by one third, a proof of the high value the Min Chia attach to land as such irrespective of the return it gives. It is also curious that when opium was permitted and gave such high returns, no attempt was made to cultivate the poppy on the mountain slopes, where it would grow very well. Even with a cash crop worth four times the value of rice the Min Chia still had their eyes fixed on the rice lands and only grew opium when rice was out of season.

The farmer who cultivates more land than he and his family can work does not always rent it out to others. He may hire labour at a fixed wage of 8 nickel cents a day and also

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provide the labourers with three meals of rice. Labour is engaged mainly in the planting and harvest seasons, and even large farms do not have hired hands permanently on the pay roll. A farm of forty *mu*, or about seven acres, which is large in the Ta Li region, would pay out not more than fifty dollars nickel in the year or about 12*s*. To which must be added the rice for the labourers' meals.

Taxation in Yunnan is light. The land tax and a tax on slaughtering animals are the only direct taxes paid by the people. The newly introduced income tax, first collected in 1938, only applies to the salaries of government officials and teachers, who can ill afford to pay it, and to merchants whose income exceeds 10,000 National Dollars per annum. There are none in this category at Ta Li. The land tax is levied only on cultivated land, and was formerly graded into three categories, applied to the best, medium, and poor land. In 1938 this was changed to a flat rate applied to all cultivated land without distinction. Collected in two equal instalments twice annually, the old tax was as follows:

Grade	*Tax per mu*	*Sterling equivalent*
Best land	4.00 dollars nickel	One shilling (6.0*s*. an acre)
Medium land	3.00 ,, ,,	ninepence (4*s*. 6*d*. an acre)
Poor land	2.00 ,, ,,	sixpence (3*s*. 0*d*. an acre)

The new system requires a flat rate of 2.40 dollars nickel from all land. This is also collected in two equal instalments at the end and in the middle of the year.

This new rate is about equivalent to sevenpence halfpenny per *mu*, which being very much lower than the old rate of a shilling on the best land, and not a very great increase over the old rate of sixpence on the worst, would

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domestic tasks. The courtyard is the real centre of the family life, where everything from the baby's toilet to the ceremonies of Ancestor Worship takes place.

Labour is cheap in Yunnan, but strangely enough even the wealthiest families have hardly any servants. The women of the family, especially the daughters-in-law and unmarried girls do the house work, cook, sweep the courtyard, and wait at table on the men, except when guests are invited. Then the young sons do the waiting at table, such as there is. Even the richest families rarely have more than one servant, to feed pigs and do the roughest work, and she is always a "*ya t'ou*," that is to say a slave girl. This system, which resembles the Mui Tsai of south China, but is hardly found in north China at all, is less practised by the Min Chia than in other parts of Yunnan, notably K'un Ming, where almost the only servants obtainable are slave girls. Slave girls are almost invariably cretinous or dwarfed individuals, who, coming from the poor families where goitre and the consequent cretinism is common, are too deformed, stupid, and unattractive to be married. For it must be remembered that a man has to pay for his bride, and few are willing to marry a cretinous dwarf. Such girls are therefore sold by their parents to the wealthy families as slaves, for life, although it is customary to give them some small remuneration, and if possible, to find them a husband when they are adult. Among the Min Chia of the Ta Li plain, where goitre and cretinism are less prevalent than in the mountain valleys, only a small number of the richer families have slave girls, and perhaps because Min Chia women are more independent in character than the other peoples of Yunnan, the slaves in Ta Li are on the whole much better treated than, for example, they are in K'un Ming. On the other hand the fact that all servants are slave girls, and the independent character of the Min